**Scrapping of several Commissions and Departments to rein in expenditure**

3616. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to scrap several Commissions and Departments under various Ministries as part of its efforts to downsize bureaucracy and rein in expenditure;

(b) if so, the deiails thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by Government to cutshort its expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) At present there is no proposal to scrap several Commissions and departments under various Ministries. The Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 have been made under clause (3) of article 77 of the Constitution for convenient transaction of business of the Government. The business to be transacted in various Ministries/Departments is specified in these rules. Depending on the changes in the nature of Government's business, policies and procedures, the departments are restructured, even abolished from time to time. The process of restructuring is an ongoing process and it takes into account the changing needs of governance.

In the recent past, the Department of Industrial Development has been merged with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion vide notification issued by the Cabinet Secretariat on 3 April, 2000 under the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961.

(c) The Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) has been issuing instructions from time to time to control creation of Plan and Non-Plan posts. In August, 1999, instructions were issued by that Ministry to all the Ministries/ Departments to undertake a review of all the posts which were lying vacant in the Ministries/Departments and in their Attached and Subordinate offices, etc., in consultaiton with the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). These instructions, *inter alia*, envisage that till the review is completed, no vacant posts will be filled up except with the approval of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). Further, such Ministries/ Department as had not fully implemented the Government's decision to achieve reduction in the number of posts (as on 1.1.1992) in compliance with the across-the-board

10% cut advised in January, 1992, were asked to fully implement that decision immediately. According to the information available with the Ministry of Finance, about 1.6 lakh posts in various categories have already been abolished as a result of this exercise. However, the exact amount of reduction in Government expenditure as a result of this measure is not centrally available.

**Changes in existing laws of CVC to fight corruption**

3617. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Vigilance Commission has sought some changes in existing laws to fight corruption;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action proposed by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING AND DEPARTMENT OF PENSIONS AND PENSIONERS' WELFARE OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The cases of corruption are dealt under the appropriate law. The Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 is the major Act to deal with the corrupt public servants. However, the Central Vigilance Commission has made the following suggestions to the respective Ministries/Departments for enactment, the position where of is indicated against each:—

(i) Corrupt Public Servants (Forfeiture of Property) Act: The law Commission of India forwarded its 166th Report on the Corrupt Public Servants (Forfeiture of Property) Bill to the Minsitry of Law, Justice & Company Affairs who laid the Report on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 28th October, 1999. However, the Report is still at consideration stage in consultation with appropriate authorities.

(ii) Freedom of Information Act: With a view to introducing greater transparency and openness in the functioning of Government and public bodies, the Government had, in January, 1997, constituted a Working Group on Right to Information and promotion of Open and Transparent Government under the Chairmanship of Shri H.D. Shourie. The report of the Group has been processed and a Bill for Freedom of Information has been drafted. The Bill is presently under examination for introduction in Parliament.